



"Wise Words" (Ecclesiastes 9:13-10:20)

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I. THE TEXT

9:13-16 There are two views as to the meaning of this:

1. They listened to the wise man in order to get them out of a jam, but when the crisis was over, they forgot all about him!

2. The NASB suggests that the Hebrew allows for the translation "could have" regarding the wise man saving the city. If so, the one who spoke loudly (v.18), contrasted with the wise man who spoke quietly, was the one who got all the attention.

* See II Sam.20:15-22

9:17-18 Rehoboam, I Kings 12:4-17

10:1 Look at the "stink" a one night stand brought to King David's life!

10:2 Republicans vv. Democrats?

* The right hand was considered the place of strength and honor, while the left represented weakness and rejection (Matt.25: 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left...41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

* Note: The word "sinister"" comes from a Latin word that means "on the left hand."

10:3 It is extremely obvious

10:4 Prov.19: 11 A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.

* Prov.12: 16 A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.

* Eccl.7: 9 Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

10:5-7 Haman vv. Mordecai; Ahab; Caiphas

* Prov.19: 10 It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury-- how much worse for a slave to rule over princes!

* Prov.30: 21 "Under three things the earth trembles, under four it cannot bear up: 22 a servant who becomes king...

10:8-9 Two views:

1. Retribution/justice

- Psalm 7: 15-16; 9:15-16; 10:2; 57:6

- Prov.26: 27 If a man digs a pit, he will fall into it; if a man rolls a stone, it will roll back on him.

- Prov.28: 10 He who leads the upright along an evil path will fall into his own trap, but the blameless will receive a good inheritance.

2. Whatever endeavor you embark upon, think it through, do it right (use wisdom).

10:10 It's better to take the time to sharpen the ax!

* A sharp tool is of great benefit in the work...

* God looks to sharpen us as His tools...

10:11 Snakes have no external ears; they pick up sound waves primarily through the bone structure of the head. More than the music played by the charmer, it is the charmer's disciplined actions (swaying and staring) that hold the snake's attention.

10:12b See I Kings 2:13ff; It was customary that if a man took a former leader's wife or concubine, he was assuming the leader's position.

10:13-14 Ever meet those people who seem to know everything about everything?

* Prov.27:1 Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.

* See James 4:13-16

* Also refer to Luke 12:18-19

10:15 He misses even the most clear directions...

* "He doesn't know enough to come in out of the rain."

10:19b That's what our government thinks! And that is what the fool thinks...

10:20 This saying is found in proverbs of many different cultures. My grandmother used to say "A little bird told me."

II. LESSONS

A. Wisdom's Voice Is Not The One Most Often Heeded

B. Wisdom's Voice Is Not The Loudest

* See I Kings 19: 9-15

C. Wisdom's Voice Is Not The Voice With The Most Words

* Sometimes after listening to some of the so called Christian counseling in our day, I'm more confused than I was before I heard it!

D. Wisdom's Voice In The Text

1. Wisdom & discipline

* Eat to live, don't live to eat; take care of things, don't be lazy...good work ethic.

* Prov.1: 2 for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; 3 for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair.

2. Wisdom & discretion

* Discretion: Cautious reserve in speech

* Prov.10: 19 When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.

* Prov.13: 3 He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.

* Prov.21: 23 He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity.

* Prov.17: 28 Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.

3. Wisdom in diverse situations

* Thinking, planning, investigating (praying) before making a move...Stopping to read the manual would have helped to make for a more enjoyable experience!

* Prov.19: 2 It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way.

* See John 7:2-6; I Sam.23:1-4, 7-13a; 30:3-8; II Sam.2:1; 5:17-19.

* Joshua 9: 14 The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD.

4. Wisdom & direction in life (10:15)

* Psalm 119: 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

* What do I do when there is no specific Scripture to give me direction?

- *Place* myself under godly authority (10:4)

- *Principles* Never violate the principles found in Scripture (Do not be unequally yoked).

- *Pray* (James 1)

- *Peace* (Col.3:15)

CONCLUSION

* Stop listening to the LOUD voice of the majority and incline your ear to the voice of wisdom; Develop some discipline, stop living to eat, feeding only your pleasures; Ask God to help you in disciplining your tongue; Don't be so impulsive in life, investigate, plan, pray, and make sure you Get God's direction in life.